From: Matt Burke
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/23/02 8:08am
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

Hello,
   I would like to say that I oppose the settlement because it leaves open
the possibility for many APIs to remain undocumented, if they are listed as
"only the interfaces between Microsoft Middleware and Microsoft Windows"
(Kegel). This seems like a loop-hole which will continue to prevent people
who do not work for or contract with Microsoft from writing software which
will tie-in well with the various Windows operating systems.
   One example is remote applications. While Unix platforms employ the MIT
X-Window system to allow gui applications to be interactively served over a
network, the best Windows equivalent, VNC (by AT&T), is hideously slow and
useless for serious work. The VNC website attributes blame for this in
question 50 of the FAQ (at http://www.uk.research.att.com/vnc/faq.html#q50):
"Because Windows gives us fewer hints about what it's doing, and because we
don't have the source code for Windows in the same way that we do for X, the
WinVNC server has to work harder to find out what's changed, and so a really
fast machine should make a big speed difference." The Linux version runs at
a far higher speed on much slower hardware, due to the full availability of
the display API used by Linux.
   Please do not approve this settlement, as the most important aspect of it
(API openness) is fatally flawed.
   Thank you,
      Matt Burke

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